

**CLAIMS**

1. A method for delivering a therapeutic dose of a gene expression cassette in a fluid selectively to heart for sustained expression comprising steps of:
  - (a) increasing dwell time of fluid in a targeted area,
  - (b) administration of a vascular permeablizing agent, and
  - (c) administration of a viral vector containing a gene expression cassette of interest.
2. A method as in claim 1, wherein the dwell time is increased by the induction of hypothermia.
3. A method as in claim 1, wherein the dwell time is increased by isolation of the heart from systemic circulation.
4. A method as in claim 1, wherein the dwell time is increased by induction of hypothermia and isolation of the heart from systemic circulation.
5. A method as in claim 1, wherein dwell time is increased by induction of complete or near-complete transient cardiac arrest.
6. A method as in claim 1, wherein dwell time is increased by induction of reversible bradycardia.
7. A method as in claim 1, wherein the vascular permeablizing agent is histamine, substance P or serotonin.
8. A method as in claim 1, wherein at least one bolus of virus is administered.
9. A method as in claim 1, wherein the viral vector is an adenoviral vector.
10. A method as in claim 9, wherein the adenoviral vector contains a strong promoter.

11. A method as in claim 10, wherein the strong promoter is a cytomegalovirus (CMV) promoter.
12. A method as in claim 10, wherein the strong promoter is a Rous sarcoma virus (RSV) promoter.
13. A method as in claim 9, wherein the adenoviral vector contains enhancer elements.
14. A method as in claim 13, wherein the enhancer is a cytomegalovirus (CMV) enhancer.
15. A method as in claim 13, wherein the enhancer is a Rous sarcoma virus (RSV) enhancer.
16. A method as in claim 1, wherein the viral vector is an adenovirus-associated viral (AAV) vector.
17. A method as in claim 16, wherein the AAV vector contains a strong promoter.
18. A method as in claim 17, wherein the strong promoter is a cytomegalovirus (CMV) promoter.
19. A method as in claim 16, wherein the strong promoter is a Rous sarcoma virus (RSV) promoter.
20. A method as in claim 9, wherein the AAV vector contains enhancer elements.
21. A method as in claim 20, wherein the enhancer is a cytomegalovirus (CMV) enhancer.
22. A method as in claim 20, wherein the enhancer is a Rous sarcoma virus (RSV) enhancer.

23. A method as in claim 1, wherein the gene of interest is a structural gene.

24. A method as in claim 23, wherein the structural gene is  $\alpha$ -sarcoglycan.

25. A method as in claim 23, wherein the structural gene is  $\beta$ -sarcoglycan.

26. A method as in claim 23, wherein the structural gene is  $\gamma$ -sarcoglycan.

27. A method as in claim 23, wherein the structural gene is  $\delta$ -sarcoglycan.

28. A method as in claim 1, wherein the gene of interest is a functional gene.

29. A method as in claim 28, wherein the functional gene is  $\beta$ -adrenergic receptor ( $\beta$ -AR).

30. A method as in claim 28, wherein the functional gene is sarcoplasmic reticulum  $\text{Ca}^{2+}$  ATPase (SERCA-2).

31. A method as in claim 1, wherein the gene of interest is a gene fragment.

32. A method as in claim 1, wherein the gene of interest is a mutated form of a gene.

33. A method as in claim 32, wherein the mutated form of the gene is a dominant negative form of phospholamban (PLB).

34. A method as in claim 32, wherein the SERCA-2 gene is administered in conjunction with a dominant negative form of PLB.

35. A method as in claim 33, wherein the dominant negative form of PLB contains a mutation at amino acid 2 from glutamic acid (E) to alanine (A).

2 36. A method as in claim 33, wherein the dominant negative form of PLB contains a mutation at amino acid 14 from arginine (R) to glutamic acid (E).

4 37. A method as in claim 33, wherein the dominant negative form of PLB contains a mutation at amino acid 16 from serine (S) to asparagine (N).

6 38. A method as in claim 33, wherein the dominant negative form of PLB contains mutations at amino acid 16 from serine (S) to glutamic acid (E).

8 39. A method as in claim 33, wherein the dominant negative form of PLB contains a mutation at amino acid 49 from valine (V) to alanine (A).

10 40. A method as in claim 33, wherein the dominant negative form of PLB contains mutations at amino acid 3 from lysine (K) to glutamic acid (E) and at amino acid 14 from arginine (R) to glutamic acid (E).